

Tillman, Tressa

From: Blanco, Arturo
Sent: Thursday, August 11, 2016 11:23 AM
To: Tillman, Tressa
Cc: Anderson, Israel
Subject: FW: EPA approach to "Environmental Justice" at Crossett

fyi

Arturo J. Blanco
Director
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From: Blanco, Arturo
Sent: Thursday, August 11, 2016 11:22 AM
To: 'ababich@tulane.edu' <ababich@tulane.edu>
Cc: Gray, David <gray.david@epa.gov>; Coleman, Sam <Coleman.Sam@epa.gov>; Rhonda Smith (smith.rhonda@epa.gov) <smith.rhonda@epa.gov>; Israel Anderson (Anderson.Israel@epa.gov) <Anderson.Israel@epa.gov>; Payne, James <payne.james@epa.gov>; Seager, Cheryl <Seager.Cheryl@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: EPA approach to "Environmental Justice" at Crossett

Good morning, Mr. Babich,

I am pleased to make your acquaintance in response to your concern to David and Ben.

The meeting facilitated by EPA to be held on August 16, 2016 follows two years of work efforts by Crossett Concerned Citizens for Environmental Justice (CCCEJ), ADEQ, ADH, EPA and other stakeholders including Georgia-Pacific. The work efforts respond to community concerns brought to EPA Region 6 by Crossett residents in 2014. The concerns presented to EPA related to odors and hydrogen sulfide emissions. In the interest of making further environmental efforts, EPA Region 6 approached both key parties (CCCEJ and GP) for their willingness to engage in direct face to face dialog. We agree that all relevant and key stakeholders should be included in the dialog, including affected regulatory agencies in Arkansas. However, in reaching final agreement, CCCEJ and GP informed EPA Region 6 of their mutual decision to proceed to meet with a smaller group, excluding participation of key stakeholders such as the state regulatory agencies and other groups. While EPA served as communication conduit for the two parties to reach consensus, EPA does not dictate to the parties who can or cannot participate in their meeting nor obligates the parties to meet if they don't want to.

With respect to the "Collaborative Community Action Planning at Work" panel during the EJ Summit in Dallas, EPA Region 6 invited all panel participants, including GP, ADEQ, and ADH. We regret that CCCEJ in Crossett declined their participation; no explanation given. Notwithstanding, EPA Region 6 remains optimistic that additional environmental progress with all-inclusive collaborative efforts can be made in Crossett.

Feel free to call me if I can be of further help.

Sincerely,

Arturo

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From: "Babich, Adam" <ababich@tulane.edu>
Date: August 9, 2016 at 4:31:54 PM EDT
To: "gray.david@epa.gov" <gray.david@epa.gov>, "harrison.ben@epa.gov" <harrison.ben@epa.gov>
Cc: "Van Dalen, Corinne J" <cvandale@tulane.edu>
Subject: EPA approach to "Environmental Justice" at Crossett

Dear David and Ben:

I hope you or someone at EPA can help me understand EPA's recent decisions with respect to environmental justice issues at Crossett, Arkansas. The EPA position appears to be one of enabling Georgia-Pacific to control the dialogue and dictate who participates in meetings. EPA is facilitating a meeting on August 16, 2016, and the invite list includes Cheryl Slavant, director of the Ouachita Riverkeeper and President of the Board of LEAN - our clients on whose behalf we submitted an environmental justice petition to EPA's Office of Civil Rights. Yet EPA has apparently dis-invited Tulane Environmental Law Clinic lawyers – leaving our clients and expert to meet with Georgia-Pacific's Senior Vice President with no assistance from counsel. My understanding is EPA allowed Georgia-Pacific to veto the presence of clinic lawyers at the meeting by threatening to boycott the meeting. This approach of allowing Georgia-Pacific to de-lawyer community leaders in meetings is particularly surprising when EPA is apparently touting Crossett as an area of focus at its Environmental Justice Summit, prominently featuring Georgia-Pacific's Senior Vice President on a panel about "Collaborative Community Action Planning." I am disappointed to see EPA apparently choose the role of industry enabler rather than acting as a problem-solver and pursuing a balanced approach to environmental justice issues. If I have any of this wrong, I hope you will correct me. Thank you.

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